Dr. Ellen Junn, Child Development Department

EXTRA CREDIT FOCUSED JOURNAL WRITING ASSIGNMENT

What is the purpose of this journal assignment? (or why should I do this?)

First, adequately completing this assignment will earn you extra 5 credit points toward your final grade! Second, and more importantly, research on college teaching shows that assignments of this sort have many benefits for students. Consequently, I designed this assignment in the hopes that you might realize the following benefits: (1) enhance your writing fluency and awareness of the writing process in a non-threatening manner; (2) enhance and reinforce your learning and understanding of course-related material; (3) provide valuable student assessment information to me (e.g., what you are currently thinking about, what you are finding valuable or not about the course, what you are learning or may be confused about, etc.,); (4) provide you with the opportunity to observe, record, generalize, summarize, react to, criticize, and make personal connections with course material and with your own experiences; (5) provide a comfortable vehicle for regular, ongoing student-teacher communication; (6) result in a visible, permanent record of your evolution as a student throughout this particular course.

What do I put in this journal?

Unless I specify a particular topic, your journal entry may be used to discuss almost anything that is **directly relevant or related to this course in some way**. The following is a list of some possible acceptable ideas for journal entries:

- summarize what you learned from class that day or the class before
- discuss the most important idea you learned in class that day
- discuss the idea from class/readings you found most confusing
- discuss your collaborative research project ideas/progress
- raise questions or concerns not directly addressed in readings
- relate what you've learned from class with your own experiences
- include & discuss clippings/articles you've found relating to class
- collect your thoughts/ideas/feelings about course information
- react to readings/course information/exercises
- keep a record of your course progress
- apply something you learned from class and discuss the results
- discuss something you learned from class that was surprising & why
- constructively critique and/or reinforce yourself or me!
- propose something new-for example, new ideas/political advocacy/etc
- be creative--include relevant work (e.g., stories, photos, poetry)!

The point here is that you have a good deal of flexibility in what to include in your journal entries, with the provision that is be something that is personally relevant or meaningful to **you** and that it is something that is **relevant to this particular course.** This journal is primarily for your benefit--so please, take it seriously and use it to your advantage! In other words, when you write in your journal, you should do it as if you are the sole audience (think of this as a kind of course diary, if that helps). On the other hand, if you want to write something to me, just say so and I can respond later, if you need me to. You should also know that this journal is absolutely confidential; I will be the only person to have access to it, besides yourself, so feel free to discuss whatever you feel comfortable with.

At the end of the semester, your entire journal will be returned for you to reread and review. At this point, you are to read through all of your entries and write up a summary statement showing how your journal

reflects your evolution as a student through this course. In this summary statement, you may also wish to react to the assignment and sum up what you gained from the course in general.

What are the specific procedures/logistics for the journal?

You must turn in your journal entry (with your name and the date) at **each and every class session for full credit.** If you are absent for any reason, you should let me know and make arrangements to turn in that day's entry as soon as possible. Writing journal entries should be a regular, ongoing activity--you will not be allowed to write up several weeks of entries all at one sitting and turn them in as separate entries. So come prepared--write your journal entry the night before or make time to write it shortly before or after class. If you completely forgot to make that day's entry, I will allow you turn one in to me by 4 pm of that day only. As the semester progresses though, you will find that your journal writing will become almost automatic and your chance of forgetting decreases.

Each class session I will bring your journals with me, and you will be required to find your journal and add that day's entry. Sometime after class, I will read them and make note of whether your journal entry received credit or not. Since I will bring your journals to class with me each day, you will be free to look through your entries anytime before or after class. For example, if you asked me to respond to a specific question or comment in your journal, I will try and do so by the next class session so you can read my comments or discuss the issue with me in person. On the last day of class, you will get your entire journal back to review in order to write up your final summary statement and reaction.

Exactly how much do I have to write to receive credit?

Since this is a small extra credit assignment, you will not be expected to write extensively. On the other hand, this assignment is not designed to be useless, time-consuming "busy work". I will be reading your entries looking for evidence of genuine effort and quality rather than counting the number of words on the page. In general, I would guess that individual entries can range anywhere from half a page (perhaps a paragraph or two) to several pages or more, depending on the topic you've selected that day; my guess is that writing in your journal for each class session should take about 10 minutes (or more for more extensive entries). Journal entries that are just several sentences long, irrelevant to the course or completely superficial will not receive credit for that day. In other words, minimal or superficial effort will not earn full credit.

You should not feel you must type out your entry--hand written entries will be completely acceptable (but please try and write or print legibly so I can read them!). There are some people who say they can no longer write longhand and prefer writing on a computer; if you are one of these people, do feel free to type out your thoughts. Points will not be subtracted for poor grammar or misspellings, however, do your best to refrain from this as much as possible anyway.

Finally, it is my belief that extra credit points are not simply arbitrary, meaningless "give away" points. Extra credit points can have significant impact on a student's final grade; thus, I feel that extra credit assignments should be meaningful or useful to either the student and/or the instructor. With this in mind, I will be evaluating the overall effort and quality of your journal when assigning the final extra credit points. The kinds of criteria I will be looking for follow bel

How will the journal be evaluated?

This assignment is not assigned a letter grade; rather, a maximum of 5 extra credit points will be awarded at the end of the semester, based on whether your journal meets the various criteria below.

(1) Quality of each entry based on, for example:
- the amount of genuine thought or care demonstrated in the entries
- the relevance of the content or topic of each entry to the course
- reasonable journal entry length (at least one solid paragraph)
- the amount of self-reflection evident
- the level of learning or assimilation taking place
- the level of cognitive activity demonstrated
- the level of seriousness evident
- the level of candor, questioning, creativity
- evidence of connecting and integrating course with your experiences
- evidence of applying and discussing course info in the real world
- evidence of developing constructive dialogue with yourself or me
- evidence of problem posing and active problem solving/resolution
- evidence of developing critical thinking skills
- evidence of heightened awareness/understanding of vital issues

(2) Points will be awarded depending on the quality of the number of entries turned in over the course of the semester:

30-27 acceptable entries	=	4 points
26-23 " "	=	3 "
22-19 " "	=	2 "
18-15 " "	=	1 "
14 fewer	=	0 "
overall summary	=	1 point
	=	5 points maximum

The overall summary is a summary statement discussing the evolution, common themes, concerns, growth, awareness, evaluation of the entire chronological list of 15 or more journal entries. You should pick up your journal on the last day of class, then write your summary statement and add it to the end of your journal before turning it in to me on the day of the final.

My hope is that this assignment will be useful to you, to me, and may be interesting for you to keep and read again at some later point in time to trace your evolution as a student in this course. So please, make a commitment, take it seriously, and make this a meaningful experience!

Joe Bustillos
Middle Childhood Development Journal
2-6-92

The debate between Original Sin versus Tabula Rasa versus inherent Goodness---raised in a Roman Catholic household and then later spending my adolescence and early adulthood with Evangelical Christians I became well versed in this debate. Of course with such a background I espoused the concept of Original Sin. It was fundamental to the faith. From the very first pages of Genesis so in the very first moments of life, the evil-doing nature in us sprang forth and each of us came into the world with such a deformity.

Depressing huh. I thought so. Sometimes I wonder if holding such a philosophy about ones inherent goodness or evil-ness (as the latter case more often was) did not lend itself to discovering such a tendency in ones Self (Self Fulfilled Prophecy, interesting mix of religious and psychological meanings). I sure as hell found it in myself. But then when one goes about looking for error isn't it likely that an error will be found? (the pathological approach to life).

Playboy magazine a few years back ran an article on the association between Fundamentalist Christian beliefs and the kinds of troubles that the Rev. Jimmy Swaggard was having at the time (little did anyone believe that he'd repeat his "sin" a few years later in Indio). The gist of the magazine's opinion was that when ones belief or philosophy runs so counter to the average human experience a collision is in the making. Regardless of how sincerely Jimmy wept on television about his

transgressions it didn't change the apparent gulf between his stated beliefs and his behavior. Original Sin or mistaken belief? Or was he just being human?

For the same reasons that Original Sin fails to pass the reality exam, I think "Inherent Goodness" also fails. It seems like a moralistic spin on an amoral reality. Maybe he was just being human (no doubt he could have been a better human, but such philosophical tension usually leads to these sorts of extremes). And the world is not so mechanistic for me to be comfortable with a Tabula Rasa approach. Maybe he was just being human (I'm kind of wishing that I had found a better example than Jimmy Swaggard--how about Jimmy Carter lusting after the Polish people? Nah, I better just give it up).

It's interesting how the text seemed to pass over childhood development and the debate between Original Sin versus Tabula Rasa versus inherent Goodness as a historical footnote. For some of us it was a debate that was a little too close and too personal to be understood as an odd belief held by 16th Century Europeans.

Joe Bustillos
Middle Childhood Development Journal
2-11-92

My brother-in-law and sister are elementary school teachers "stationed" in Los Angeles County. After spending a few hours with them and hearing their never-ending-stories about administrative indifference and the social ills which contribute to making their jobs more difficult my girlfriend asked me if I still wanted to change the world. Nope, I said, besides Education is not about changing the world.

Reading in the text how children born in the United States fare in comparison to other countries reminded me of her question and my own distrust of programs that promise to change the world.

Many years ago (in a previous incarnation, as far as I was concerned) I saw Evangelical Christians flirt with the possibility of using the Mass Media to change the world and "bring more souls to Christ." Even then, as a willing participant, I questioned whether massive programs and media blitzes could effect change on something that is essentially a personal matter. Needless to say I didn't get very far as a Christian musician, most likely because I didn't trust the medium to be effective or remain truthful to the message (as an excursus: I'm now of the opinion that the appeal the mass media had for these folks was that it was a way to satisfy their need to "spread the gospel" without getting their individual hands dirty or getting off their collective couches---but that's neither here nor there).

What does all this have to do with Education or Middle Childhood? My girlfriend's question and my earlier experience with changing the world crystallized for me the reason why I want to become a teacher. No, I don't want to change the world but I do want to make a difference. Education isn't a mass media/big program venture, at it's best it's a one-to-one/small group experience of discovery. I think my brother-in-law and sister would agree with that.

(I didn't have the journal entry question assigned last class with me . . . sorry)

Joe Bustillos
Child Development 325
Focus Journal
02-13-92

I met the PsycLIT computer and the other library computers many years ago. The one disadvantage that I have had with the system over the years is that the journals found during the query search are frequently "not available" at the library. Unfortunately much of my research in the past has been conducted under inhuman time-constraints, so I was unable to "order" the sought after journal article (many of the sociology articles were not in English either).

Interestingly, I would say that there were not that many times during my career at CSUF in which a research paper was required. The large general ed. (read "core curriculum") courses rested almost entirely on test scores. I graduated last Spring with a B.A. in journalism and most of my papers were conducted with interviews and very little library research.

Way back in 1981 I graduated from Biola University (B.A., Biblical Studies). At Biola we were required to write a research paper for just about every course (I had spent two years prior to that at Loyola-Marymount University where the conditions were pretty much the same). Ha, this was long before either the universities or I had easy access to research databases (let's hear it for the old card files and quarterly editions of Reader's Guide).

I can understand, given general class sizes, why very few of my courses required research papers. But there is obviously something that can be communicated to an instructor through a

paper that cannot be easily communicated with exams. Education by default?

Journal Entry #1:

What was your reaction to the first day of class? Be specific.

Journal Entry #2:

1. Record your answers to each of the issues 1-5 from class.
2. Briefly explain why you chose each response for the questions above. Did the class discussion make you think about your choice in a different way later? Why or why not?

Journal Entry #3

1. Do you know what PsycLIT is? (Answer this before we discuss this in class!) If so, explain and when did you learn about it?
2. Estimate the number of major papers you written (out of how many courses you have taken here at CSUF) that **required library research**? How would you honestly rate your library skills?

Joe Bustillos
Middle Childhood Development Journal
2-18-92

The infamous ISSUES 1-5 journal entry: Here is a perfect example of how the answers to multiple choice questions may fail to capture the actual meaning of the answerer. This reminds me of a meeting I once attended in San Jose.

At this informal gathering of intellectuals suffering from Post-Catholic stress syndrome (something like A.A. for the once religious), a gentleman who was developing Artificial or Computer Intelligence systems commented that anything can be reduced to a series of yes and no questions (binary logic). Like a peep from the mouse in the corner I responded that this might be true but then the answer would be so cumbersome that it would be useless for humans to work with. The gentleman was struck dumb but eventually asked if I worked with computers. I smiled. There are some things that are better expressed with words rather than numbers, but I digress.

I answered the first question, Nature versus Nurture, with response "C" or 50/50. One cannot deny the influence of genetic dispositions. But to consider ones genes as having preeminence over the question of environment is to suppose that a human being can develop in a cultural/ethnic/social vacuum. There is no such thing. Even the hermits and monks are responding against a social backdrop.

To postulate either environment or genetics without the other is try to define reality as a two-dimensional phenomenon. Humans are not made that way. The interaction between the

genetic and the environmental realities makes this question a bit like my friend's binary logic. Having broken the question down to its component parts it has been robbed of its viability.

For question two, the Moral character of human beings, I answered "B" or John Locke's "tabula rasa." Having previously expressed my opinion on the Medieval "seething cauldron" view of human nature suffice it to say that I find both the cauldron view and the noble savage view to be a "Moralistic spin on an amoral reality." For that matter I find the "tabula rasa" option to be insufficient as well. The question of humankind's moral nature is more a question of each individuals' ability to or willingness to comply with the given norms of ones own society.

I also find Rouseau's belief in the noble savage particularly naive. It's understandable that disillusioned Europeans might have found Native Americans or Hawaiians or Tahitians quite refreshing. But it fails to recognize that each society is quite capable of its own barbarisms. This whole thing confuses the disagreeable parts of one society with the supposed moral aptitude of another.

On question three, the Continuous/Discontinuous development of humans, I answered "A" or discontinuous. Paleontologist Stephen Jay Gould once wrote that evolution was not the stately gradual ascendancy from the single cell organism to the arrival of Homo sapiens but rather an evolution filled with bursts of change and dead ends. On a personal level I find that human development (at least this human's development) seems to be similar to Gould's theory of evolution.

With that said I have to add that given the complexity of humans and human development it is a bit like the moral nature question. It risks appearing like a human interpretation imposed upon a less definable reality.

My answer to the fourth question, whether a child is basically active or passive was base upon my own perception of my own childhood. ("Children are to be seen and not heard," remember that one?)

Do children develop through interaction or through molding? Interaction would be nice but my interaction was generally in response to my parent's molding. I answered "B" as in molding for that reason.

Question five, Stable versus Unstable traits, at first sounds a bit like fatalism versus optimism. My father, a non-Catholic, used to quote the Catholic church as saying, "Give us your children for the first five years and for the rest of their lives they will be ours." (I don't know where he heard that one, probably one of the apocryphal books of the Bible that the Protestants don't believe in). Anyway, I answered "B" as in "Unstable" because I believe in change. I mean, they had the first fifteen years and it didn't stick.

Joe Bustillos
Childhood Development
February 20, 1992

She suggested shorter entries for the journal. I've always had a habit of overdoing one aspect of some class requirement (to the detriment of another---gee I wonder if that's why my G.P.A. is so . . . average?). Well then, let's discuss sex in the classroom.

Not the kind of sex that the L.A. Unified School District has been debating about; Not sex, the act. Long before there is sex, the act, there is sex, the self image.

Some aggressive well meaning loud folk fear that it is through magazines (the kind generally subtitled "entertainment for men") and late night cable TV movies that our youngsters learn the negative (some might say deplorable) aspects of sexual self-image. I am of the opinion, however, that the negative and the positive aspects of sexual self-image are gained through more subtle ways.

I am taking my introductory course in Elementary classroom teaching (EDELM 315) which requires 60 hours of classroom work in an elementary school ("exposure," "field experience" whatever euphemism one chooses). One of the first things that I noticed (after I got over the shock of how small third graders really are) was the difference in behavior along traditional sex role stereotypes.

On this particular day the teacher had discussed and demonstrated the use of a lever in the transfer of energy. The class was seated in group tables of six to ten students, each

student having a single partner. The teacher instructed the students to use their rulers and film canisters and little plastic dogs (affectionately named "Zippy, the wonder dog" by the teacher) to demonstrate moving energy. In just about every pairing where the partners were mixed sex, the boys took the ruler and dog and did most of the activity and the girls watched.

Everyone one had been instructed to use the ruler and lift Zippy but the boys dominated the activity while the girls were given cursory use of the equipment. In other activities these same girls were not by any means helpless wall flowers, but in this direct face-to-face activity they yielded. How is that possible? At such a young age these kids are already demonstrating social/sexual stereotypes.

This last week when I visited them they were sent off to another teacher for their P.E. activity. The girls came back animated, the boys came back bored. They had spent their P.E. period doing jump-rope. The boys, who had been social inhibited about playing jump-rope before, failed miserably when competing with or even participating at the girls' level. But they vowed, "Wait 'til next week. Next week we get to play basketball."

In the past few decades the institutions of marriage and community have taken a beating. They are no longer the stable acknowledged backgrounds to our every social interaction. The interaction between the sexes is no longer a given, as can be demonstrated by the two most recent nationally televised rape cases and one Supreme Court confirmation hearing.

How do teachers prepare or interact with their students

given the reality of this brave new world? How do educators deal with the possible tension this presents given some of the traditional sexual stereotypes the students may be learning at home?

Joe Bustillos
Childhood Development Journal
February 25, 1992

Ack! Here I had proposed investigating sex role stereotypes in elementary school students and I was showing those same tendencies in how I was working with my partner in this research project. What was that quote about how research always to some extent contaminates the subject researched. Ugh.

If someone were to research our research methodology and division of labor I wonder if they would agree that expediency was the reason. I mean, who really does look after those who do the research? This is a perfect case where one cannot leave ones own cultural/social background in order to observe in a purely objective sense some element of that same culture.

Now, in defense of my actions I took a posture of leadership in the group when it became obvious that my partner had not worked with the microfilm machines. She certainly knew her way around the PsychLit computers but didn't seem sure about what to do next. So I downloaded our finding onto disk, took the disk home, eliminated the references that were not in English and brought a printed list to our next meeting. We decided to split the list between us (21 articles each) and I suggested that we start by individually see if the library carried the needed journals in the reference computer. With that done I helped her look up her journals first on the microfilm and then in the stacks. It seemed that she had never done this before. I'm not sure what level my partner is at, but I was a little surprised that she'd never looked up an article from the microfilm or

stacks collection. Once I pointed the way she was more than up to the task, but the initial hesitancy caught me off guard at first.

So am I being sexist or just showing the results of my longer experience? (Hell, if someone wants to get picky---my girlfriend for example---they might find some sexism in the selection of a female partner. I mean I could have chosen the other male partner in our class. . . . Not!) So as my female partner and I look at the behavior of five- to nine-year-olds you better believe that I'm going to question whether the behavior is sex role stereotypes or just the greater experience of the male partner.

Joe Bustillos
Childhood Development Journal
March 2, 1992

Every time I discuss with my brother-in-law my latest assignment to get into the credential program he says, "I don't remember ever having to do that." When I told him that, according to an "unofficial source," the program was looking for students with 3.80 GPA's he gave me a look of heavy resignation. My girlfriend said that she knew students getting into optometric school that weren't pulling 3.80. I gave her a look of heavy resignation.

Why the heavy duty requirements for a job that doesn't pay that much? they've asked. I tried to explain to them that the task of education is such an important job that the state is turning away unemployed astronauts---but they didn't fall for it. One wonders if this current batch of requirements isn't the result of today's employment market being an employer's market. No doubt the teaching profession over the past two decades has taken a few black eyes for allowing some marginally fit people to occupy the teacher's desk, but to expect student's with 3.80 GPA's to become teachers? I wonder is NASA is hiring?

An Old Testament professor from Biola once told me when I was considering the teaching profession to make sure it was something that I loved because there was no pay in it. If God doesn't fully compensate his servants than I shouldn't expect so much from the state. Also, unless we allow ourselves to be tested a bit we will never know if we have the stuff to succeed (whether the credential prerequisites have any relation to

success in the given task is not a given).

The chief reason for all of this non-too-subtle exposition of vocational doubt is because I spent the past week scrambling to get my credential application package together. Gathering five transcripts from universities scattered about the L.A. basin, multiple faculty recommendations from some instructors who haven't seen me in years and complying a "brief" autobiography would make any wonder if they really wanted to be a teacher (of course, I could have started gathering my material months ago, but then as a former journalist I thrive on the pressure---not!). I got to the point where I figured that if I didn't make the Fall cut then I would look into getting my emergency credential and substitute teaching (actually showing some income in teaching might make it possible for me get some tax relief on the expenses of getting the full credential). But this thing isn't about money, is it.

Joe Bustillos
Middle Childhood Development
March 5, 1992

I have to take the NTE this coming Saturday. We've already discussed in class the possible shortcomings of standardized exams (my girlfriend is continually amazed at the prodigious amount of trivial knowledge that I regularly call up---mostly pertaining to movie dialogues and individual scenes---but quickly asks what the hell that has to do with intelligence, smart girl). And I for my part would be more relieved if this exam didn't play such a large role in getting in and successfully completing the credential program.

Yesterday I happened to speak with a substitute teacher who was planning on completing is Master's work at Fuller Seminary. I had spent a wonderful four quarters at Fuller Seven years ago. So we got into an energetic conversation comparing the Fuller experience with the educational style of Biola University (I had received a B.A. in Biblical Studies in '81 and he was working on his M.A. at Biola's seminary, Talbot). There was a professor of Systematic Theology at Fuller, Dr. Colin Brown, who had a most interesting attitude toward taking exams and earning ones grade.

Brown said to us at the beginning of the semester, "Your purpose at this seminary is to become teachers of theology. It is our job to see that you are equip for that task." To that end, in his classes, he recognized the limited value of exams. If the purpose of a class is a future occupation and not merely to earn a grade/degree than an exam only tells the instructor the current state of the student's memorization of the material. Far

more important to the student will be the body of notes taken in the course of the lecture. Class involvement and quality of lecture notes (which were graded at the end of the semester) accounted for fifty percent of the final grade. Fifty percent of the grade for ones lecture notes, what a concept!

A single one hour mid-term exam did account for twenty percent of the final grade. A fifteen-page essay (research/exposition paper), due at the end of the quarter accounted for the remaining thirty percent of the grade. Now, granted this was a graduate level class but to have half of ones grade ride on a function normally not even accounted for in other classes was a progressive idea indeed. A grading policy based on the larger function of the program, one can only hope that revelations of this nature are not limited to seminaries.

One of the difficulties of possibly translating this concept to a given university class is the larger class population and the relative inability to assume the larger program goal of that population. But if one were to make the translation and the program was preparation for and participation in the teacher's training program than fifty percent of the grade would be classroom exposure and the remaining fifty percent evenly divided between lecture participation, a research project, and exams. I think that it's a great idea, but then this just may be the thoughts of someone facing the biggest exam of his academic career.

Joe Bustillos
Middle Childhood Development journal
March 10, 1992

"I came, I saw, I got my butt kicked,"
-1992 American Winter Olympian.

It's been four days since I took the NTE and my hands still shake when I see a scantron sheet. But the doctor said that I should be over this in time for Thursday's exam (oh joy!).

Actually there was a little bit of a mix up on Saturday when I took the NTE. Somehow I found myself enrolled in all three sections of the core exam. For those who may have moved on to the teaching profession without having submitted themselves to this number two pencil nightmare the three sections are: general knowledge, communication skills and finally professional knowledge. Imagine my surprise when I arrived at my communications and professional sessions and the auditorium sized group of test takers had been reduced to seven tired faces. I became more concerned when it appeared that these folks had already begun their teaching careers (in fact a few looked like they'd begun their careers about the time Woodrow Wilson was considering how best to sell the idea of the League of Nations). Am I supposed to be here?

So I sat down and took the additional four hours of exams (what a glutton for punishment). The general knowledge and communications portions didn't bother me much, but I sure got my butt kicked in the professional session. Come June I might not have had a much difficulty---but then I'd have a least completed my first two education courses. I wonder if they'll let me forgo

the rest of the lecture course-work if I pass the professional section of the exam (of course that's a bit like wondering if they'll let me buy house X if I win the lotto). Oh, ain't education fun!

Next monday my beginning education instructor wants an essay on our philosophy of education. My girlfriend said, "Great, I'll go chop down a few trees to make sure we don't run out of paper for this treatise." Smart-aleck. He's limiting us to a single page. Have you been talking to him about your students?

Joe Bustillos
Middle Childhood Development Journal
3-12-02

I hate becoming self-indulgent but . . . argh! I wonder if this is a pre-cursor of what my life might be as a teacher (I wanted to write, "my life as a dog" but someone's already used that one). I survived the NTE assault over the weekend. I found my credential interview amazingly brief. And now it's time for mid-term exams. Please, let me repeat myself: Argh!

Among my many vices, I tend to bury myself in technology when I need to escape from the demands of life. Like yesterday, for example, before getting my class notes together I thought that I'd play a little game on my laptop computer. Just a little game. Granted, with the aid of a computer this game isn't nearly as time consuming as I remember it being when I was a kid, but I still managed to blow a lot of time playing Monopoly. It was just a short game.

Then this morning as I was struggling through more reading a friend from work called with a question about computer viruses and a compression program called Stacker. Boom, there went 45 minutes that I didn't have to spend. IBM promised us that it would make our lives more efficient and simpler. Ha, I don't think that even the "Little Tramp" would fall for that one. (Here's that short journal you were looking for).

Joe Bustillos
Middle Childhood Development Journal
3/16/92

Organization, lesson plans, long range goals . . . you'd think a computer nerd would be organized. Ha, if it weren't for the computer I'd just be disorganized and illegible. And I am apparently not the only one.

When I first asked my brother-in-law if I could observe his 3rd grade class and showed him the cover-letter written by my Beginning Education instructor, he offered that he might not be the best teacher to model after. His failing was lesson plans. This is not to say that his lessons do not appear to be well thought out or that they failed to flow. But there never seemed to be enough time to write down the minutiae of every point and sub-point of the lessons. Time---but isn't it for the sake of time that lesson plans are encouraged?

A speaker in an educational video said that proper classroom management can be the difference of between students receiving as little as 18 hours of instruction versus 27 hours per week. This roughly turned out to be a difference of 54 additional days of instruction a year, or way over an additional day for each week. The video began with reference to another study that said that a longer school day and more school days per year were part of the answer to turning America's failing school system around. But all of this could be achieved, so the speaker implied, by writing out a simple outline of the day's/week's/month's progress and plans.

Stretching far back into my most distant foggy memories are admonitions to write an outline before proceeding with any writing (of course, journal writing is a different creature). Back in those ancient days, long before Guttenburg's press, writing an outline was a genuine pain in the ass. But much computer software has sprung up to make the task manageable. Now if this is that helpful in something as pedestrian as writing then it has got to be an incredible aid in something like teaching. In teaching the poor instructor doesn't have the luxury of running several drafts of the lesson before a "live audience" (at least not if he or she intends to survive). So, organize, organize, organize (Teachers of the World Unite! Ugh, I'm getting militant).

Joe Bustillos
Middle Childhood Development Journal
3-19-92

It's euphemistically called "Classroom Management." In some cases it might more accurately be called "Crowd Control" or "Riot Containment" or "Work-able Chaos." Yes, it is that age old question: how does one adult, commissioned to dispense cultural/intellectual material, survive a daily exposure of 6-hours or more to 30-plus 3-foot beings who possess a genetic predisposition toward random verbal outbursts, continuous exuberant body movement and ruthless anti-lesson-plan circuitry. How does one survive the potential mental meltdown, and then return for more the next day?

The answer, of course, is that if it were really this bad no one would return. But there are those times when one must wonder, "How the hell did I get myself into this situation?" Recess and Lunch line duty come to mind. After one particularly rough experience between my 3rd grade class and a music teacher the question became less rhetorical.

For most of the morning the class moved along smoothly. Following recess and a fire drill, Mr. Quinby instructed them on addressing their envelopes and copying the corrected copy of their "thank you" letters to the room seven second-graders for the preceding afternoon's rendition of "The Three Piggy Opera." Then following lunch they were given more time to finish their letters or do "silent reading." Mr. Quinby finished the early afternoon by reading to them the last chapters of "Charlotte's

Web." When they went to Mrs. Black's class they had been orderly and attentive and quite "manageable." That ended before they took their seats in her room.

Inattentive, argumentative, disruptive---she was trying to teach them a song they'd only heard once before ("Dirt made my lunch"). It turned into 30-minutes of hell. She decided after several attempts to have them play a calculator game with a partner.

In talking with Mr. Quinby after the students had left for the day it became clear that this situation, being a "real life" situation, would not be solved with a one-step solution. Among the factors discussed: the differences in personality and teaching style between Mr. Quinby and Mrs. Black (Mrs. Black was being far too nice), music instruction being a noisy venture, the kids exhibiting a lack of "ownership" because they were in someone else's room (the same being true of the teacher: they're not "her kids"), and the observation that any introduced change is an excuse for some kids to act up.

When the kids first arrived in her room much time was spent handing out song sheets (she would have individually handed out each sheet if I hadn't stepped in). This administrative detail might have been handled differently, leaving the kids less idle time and less time to act up. There was a controversy about which seat belonged to whom. Greater familiarity with each student, exhibited by using their names more, might have gotten them motivated to work with her on the same team. Instead it

felt like one single adult versus thirty-plus students. I can understand why she fell back to the calculator game.

It was a definite learning experience for me (today's riddle: "Don't turn your back on the ocean, it has a way of creeping up on you."---stolen from "Kindergarten Cop").

Joe Bustillos
Middle Childhood Development Journal
March 24, 1992

"We'd have the perfect school system if we could just select the right parents." Tim Harvey, Intro to Elementary Ed Instructor

When all is said and done, when the budgets are approved and teachers' credentials scrutinized, the effectiveness of a given student's education will depend on the involvement of the parents (or the lack thereof). During the early 80's Professor Reginald Clark studied minority families in Chicago and found that parental involvement made the difference between a student dropping out or graduating from high school.

But one doesn't have to be poor or Black for the Parental Involvement factor to kick in. In affluent Orange County with its fifty percent divorce rate, single parent households will cut neatly into the Parental Involvement quotient. Harried and having to be in two places at once, all one needs is hear that Junior is acting up in English class and Junior's father cannot be reached to take care of the situation (am I being hypothetical? Not!).

The reality is that the school system is having to respond to situations that it was never designed to address. Citizenship and Arithmetic, okay, but what does the teacher do when Junior shows up on Monday morning in filthy clothes and hungry? How about when they just don't show up because the folks can't be bothered to see that they get to school?

Perhaps while the parents are voting on whether to approve this voucher system for selecting their childrens' school, the teachers should push for a ballot measure approving a voucher system for selecting the parents that they want in their schools.

Joe Bustillos
Middle Childhood Journal
3-26-92

There have been a series of popular books published on the every day lives of people from ancient civilizations. There was a book on the every day lives of the Romans, for example. I don't know how successful the books were in terms of sales (the only measure understood by "modern" man) but seeing the similarities and differences between ourselves and the ancients can be quite enlightening.

A former roommate who was a history major once checked out a book on the lives of the ancient Mesopotamians. One sunny afternoon we sat outside Biola's library and he read passages that had been gathered from students' journals. We laughed because there was something surreal and ridiculous about the way the student struggled with his lesson. There was something reminiscent of the comic strip "Charlie Brown" in how he surrendered to his inevitable failure. Across the centuries, I identified with the task of learning this new task. But my reach was cut short because our Mesopotamian friend was repeatedly beaten for each failure in his school work. I grappled with personal loss of confidence. He grappled with welts from the canings and beatings.

I don't remember if I have this straight but I think the ancient word for "education" was related to the word "discipline" which was synonymous beatings. In one of my last journal entries I joked about control in the classroom but there is something

terribly tragic about the way we once used brutal force to "mold" our students into our image. It may have been the popular logic at the time, but I do believe that there is an ancient proverb about motivation that said that you can attract more flies with honey than with vinegar.

Joe Bustillos
Middle Childhood Development Journal
March 31, 1992

I know that I have brought this subject up before, but what the heck, this is my journal. I had mentioned having to develop a philosophy of education for my intro to elementary education class but I never got around to sharing my findings. So here it is. By way of introduction, the chapter in my intro text on educational philosophy broke the major philosophies down to four major groups. I decided to use the book's organization as a starting point for my essay.

Idealism, Realism, Pragmatism, Existentialism, Progressivism, Perennialism, Monism, Zoroastrianism . . . I've never been comfortable with labels. But if I must make a choice between doors one through four then I would have to choose door number three, Pragmatism.

As a journalism student I always had a thing about modern journalism's fabled "objectivity." I've always believed that "Truth," as journalists and other communicators have presented it, is an approximation. As a student of Anthropology I learned that there is an "agreed upon" nature to "Truth," and that "good Truth" does not run rough-shod over the weight of scientific observation and speculation. I would obviously make a lousy Realist or Idealist, for that matter.

Blame my former religious heritage, but I am not willing to believe in either "the moment" or even "the individual" as the highest reality. That's too depressing. By my way of thinking

Existentialism is a reaction against it's stifling authoritarian mental/social forbearers. Reactions do not make good philosophies.

Then again, arriving at a philosophy by a process of elimination tells me more of what I don't believe in than in what I do believe in. In this case, a black box does not make a very good philosophy of education either.

"Experience is the thing"---I haven't heard that slogan for a long time (probably since Coke-a-cola was first trying to teach the world to sing). Learning by doing, that means that there are things to be learned. Within the relative confines of each classroom there is a body of understanding/knowledge that must be grasped for the classroom to progress to the next stage. Like "good Truth," this knowledge does not run contrary to the world outside the classroom. It embraces that world. The world and the knowledge and the classroom are the same thing.

If there are some areas where I might differ from the pragmatist party line it is that I believe that there are fundamental skills that the students must grasp to fully appreciate the next levels of such non-skills areas such as creativity and imagination. Saxophonist Branford Marsalis once commented that someone might say that they're playing Beethoven in their own way. But until they learn to play him "properly" then, according to Marsalis, they're just covering up for not really knowing how to play. What's that saying, "you have to learn to walk before you can run." As an artist, creativity

without structure is a waste of energy (the irrationalists, like the existentialists who spawned them, could get away with it because the structure was implied through the cultural structure).

Educationally this means that there is reading, writing, and arithmetic, but they are not ends unto themselves. They are skills to be built upon. They are as fundamental as language, and just as fluid.

Joe Bustillos
Middle Childhood Development Journal
April 2, 1992

Modeling---say that and folks generally think of leggy blonde wearing outrageous outfits walking down a runway or maybe Carol Marol gesturing next to a toaster-oven. That's not exactly an educational concept. But I was reminded the other day about the importance of modeling when it comes to teacher training.

I've been teaching aerobic exercise classes for the last five years. A woman, who was taking a training course, approached me to ask about where I got my music and other such concerns of soon-to-be-aerobic instructors. I showed her the tape (I usually make my own tapes but this one was made by a company specializing in aerobics music---but I digress) and suggested a way to figure out the specifics of her first class. I don't remember if someone told me to do this or if I just figured it out, but when I got my first class I just cloned the music and workout sequence from the class I attended the most. I literally found the music that that teacher had used and ordered it more or less in the same fashion and copied her workout. Figuring out every little aspect of a workout class can be more than a little overwhelming for a first time teacher. It's a bit like reinventing the wheel. So cloning, or more properly "modeling," is a good technique to get over the first time jitters.

Of course the good instructor will eventually make the class his own and add elements that differentiates it from the source class. I've had several students in my class go on to become instructors. It's kind of fun walking in on their class and hear

them say things as part of their instruction that I say (sometimes it's pretty much verbatim). On the whole it's there class and I'm just happy to give to them what someone else gave to me.

Obviously one cannot clone an elementary school curriculum verbatim from their favorite teacher if for not other reason than that it's too much memorization. But the business of getting into a classroom and spending a semester observing, acting as an aid, correcting a few papers---the value of that experience cannot be underestimated.

Joe Bustillos
Middle Childhood Development
April 7, 1992

A Newsweek cover story, a local news flash breaking into the mid-day soap operas, an old joke about why teachers in metro L.A. get paid more than those in the suburbs---"Kids and Guns: A Report From America's Classroom Killing Grounds" (the Newsweek headline). Maybe the image of Arnold Schwarzenegger as a kindergarten teacher isn't so far off after all.

Last week, on April Fool's Day, an elementary school student at a private school pulled out a gun from his backpack and shot a fellow student, hitting her spinal column. The Newsweek article talks about a New York high school student opening fire in a crowded hallway, killing a student and a teacher in the random shooting. Way back in the Paleozoic Era, when I was in elementary school, the worst my teachers had to contend with was us talking too much (something I've long since corrected) and the occasional fallout from a mud fight (that's how long ago that was, there was enough rain to create mud puddles). Hell, no one even thought enough to bring a knife or sticks, just mud (I think we kind of liked it that way). Hell, now they have to check third graders for nine-millimeter handguns.

Of course, the media might be playing a role on how frequent and how wide spread the problem is. Any incidence of violence is inexcusable, but in Los Angeles, a somewhat lawless town in its own right, the schools still seem to be the island peace in this troubled ocean.

So, in the light of all this do I still want to be a teacher? Hell, yes. Who's going to influence these kids for the positive if I don't try?.

Joe Bustillos
Middle Childhood Development Journal
April 9, 1992

I was reminded recently of a Pacific Bell co-worker's disparaging comments about the number of hours school teachers put on the job and how they're paid. His comment was something to the effect that he didn't know too many jobs where someone could get paid "x" amount for only nine months worth of work (his wife worked as an instructional aid at one of the schools in Brea, so I guess he felt privy to special knowledge). What brought this incident to mind was my own recent experience in the cushy world of education.

I work the night shift for Pacific Bell (midnight to 8 A.M.) so when I go to my weekly elementary school observation I don't get there until after 10. After a couple months of this I felt like I was missing an important part of the educational day---the period from the first bell to the first recess. So on a day that I was not scheduled to work I got to my classroom before the 8:30 A.M. bell. Now, granted, it might have been the implosion of thirty-plus small voices in on me so early in the morning (I usually work alone at night), but I felt my energy level taxed in no small way by the time we shoo-ed them out the door that afternoon. To do this every day, or nine months? Not, and hold a second job.

I was on the go from the moment the kids walked through the door. Attendance, lunch menu selections, pledge of allegiance, aluminum recycling project were all handled quickly. Before we knew it we were our small group literature/social studies groups.

I led eight kids through a an overview booklet on the American Indians. I only had one case of someone calling someone else "a bad word" and then crying because she was so upset from having said it. Then we colored the booklets. "Okay, everybody stay in your groups while you color your booklets, no go back to your normal seats," major traffic jam. Oops. Then we had math to do (fractions with green, red, blue and yellow bears). Then after recess, they started making paper Indian masks. Even though the day was a shortened day (they were out by 1:30), I was exhausted. And my teacher, Paul, had two in-service sessions to conduct at other schools that afternoon.

Perhaps teachers don't put in that much time in front of the classroom "teaching." But compared to the typical low-impact Pacific Bell job with all its breaks, lunches and miscellaneous time-outs ("smoke break", potty break, newspaper break, before the first cup of coffee break, after the first cup of coffee break, second cup of coffee break . . .) teachers are not being paid enough for their cushy short-day nine-month job.

Joe Bustillos
Middle Childhood Development Journal
April 21, 1992

Mouthed to the parent of one of his victims:
"I'm sorry."
A nod is exchanged.
Final statement:
"You can be a king or a street sweeper
but everyone has to deal with the grim reaper."

This morning a few minutes after six, and fourteen years after the crime, California put Robert Alton Harris to death. No doubt his family and the families of his victims are glad that the emotional rollercoaster is over.

Because of what appears to me as a less than equitable distribution of justice in death penalty crimes I do not believe that California's return to the death penalty will fix anything. It makes me wonder when the son of a wealthy Denver businessman can plan and nearly accomplish the assassination of an American president and suffer nothing more than an indefinite stay in a mental hospital. Was Harris' cavalier heartless murder of two San Diego teenager evidence of a "mental instability" at least equal to that of John Hinckley, Jr.? One issue raised during one of the many execution appeals was that Harris was mentally incompetent because of his mother's heavy drinking problem while she was pregnant with his (prenatal alcoholic syndrome?). So was justice served?

As a future educator I have to say that our society is better served when we dedicate the greater balance of our limited resources on education and family assistance. There will always

be social deviants and sociopaths, but they should be "caught" or dealt with long before it becomes a death penalty issue.

I even bring up the Robert Alton Harris case because, if the prenatal alcoholic syndrome is at all a factor, then we are looking at just the tip of the iceberg. Now entering the educational system are the crack-babies. How well will the system bear up under the weight of that responsibility? Conservatives cry out for a return to the basics: reading, writing, arithmetic. How does one teach long division to a student that cannot focus on any subject for longer than 15 seconds? I don't think that the voucher system will get us out of that one.

Joe Bustillos
Middle Childhood Development Journal
4-28-92

My intro to education instructor suggested yesterday that in light of the difficult time students have in concentrating on anything towards the end of the semester, that the end of the semester should not fall on some pre-announced date but at some arbitrary interval. He suggested that at 2 O'clock on the last day that the teacher inform his students that that day is the final day before summer vacation.

For some reason his suggestion reminded me of something I remember reading regarding an ancient Chinese judicial policy. According to this historian (the exact reference I have long forgotten . . .), during this ancient dynasty the ruling elders decided to keep their code of laws secret. They surmised that if the population was not sure what was permitted and what was not that they would not take any chances. They would not try to skirt around the law because it had this terrifying omniscient quality. (I love writing this stuff in the middle of the night, it made sense when I started out but now at 7:00 A.M., the connection is markedly tenuous).

What does this have to do with summer vacation? First off, I realize that my instructor was speaking in jest when he suggested a pop-vacation solution for his problem of kids who cannot focus on the lesson at hand. Nonetheless, the technique employed by the Chinese elders and my instructor's pop-vacation share the concept of removing from their constituents the area of concern (following the law, summer vacation anxiety,

respectively). The question remains, where the Chinese elders successful? The answer to that question would probably tell us whether my instructor would also find success.

I believe that the Chinese elders were successful as long as two conditions existed. The first was that the people they governed remained completely isolated from any outside influence. The second was that the needs and cares for survival exceeded their need to become involved in government policies. Therefore, my instructor might have some success if he can keep his students busy and isolated from students from other classes (if it's a policy follow by his class alone) or other schools (if it's a policy follow by his school alone). Other than that, he can be sure that the kids would revolt once they received word that other students were on vacation, were going on vacation, or that the other students' vacation was going to begin in two weeks. Back to square one. Talk about philosophical dilemmas. Education can be so complicated.

Joe Bustillos
Middle Childhood Development Journal
4-30-92

The whole discussion about childhood play behavior is intriguing to me, especially in regards to learned behaviors carried into adulthood.

The other day I was recounting to my girlfriend how my weekends as a child were spent either inside straightening up my room or outside helping my father in the yard. My parents were hardly tyrants but they had a strong work ethic. I remember more than once finishing my chores in my room and being sent outside when my mother caught me reading in my bedroom. On another occasion my mom mentioned "idle hands" and something about the devil. What was that all about.

It didn't take much analysis later in life for me to realize that my father is the kind of person that doesn't know how to relax. When I was a kid his chief recreational relaxation activity was working in the yard. And I'm not talking about a little gardening and a little weed pulling. He'd design and build a patio deck from scratch, lay some ground cover around it, plant a few trees, put up a fence and then six or seven months later he'd tear the whole thing down and start over again
. In the twenty-five years that my folks have been in that Mission Viejo home it has had easily a dozen different looks and this isn't counting the number of renovations undertaken inside the structure.

A couple months ago, when we were discussing their plans of selling the place and the things that needed to be done before

they could sell it, I told him that he needed to realize that it was never a matter of him ever finally finishing the house. What made him happy was the activity of working on the thing. Because it was purely an intrinsic thing (lord knows that we, as kids, tried to discourage his insatiable appetite for redoing the house) I guess this behavior could be described as "play." But because the activity was always cloaked in language about getting this and that "done" (an activity that did not have itself as it's own end; part 3 of the definition of play: "something done as end-in-itself/for the pleasure of it") it felt more like confusing obsessive behavior than play. Yeah, I could see telling my dad that all along he was just playing in the backyard and subjecting us to it. Then again he was the guy that literally said, upon the shaky beginnings of one of our few family vacations, that we were going to enjoy ourselves "or else." I wonder if any of this has anything to do with the fact that I have over a dozen games on my computer and have never learned to play any of them except tetris and solitaire?

Joe Bustillos
Middle Childhood Development Journal
May 5, 1992

Education reform, everyone seems to have their own ideas about what needs to change in Education. Conservatives blame a supposed abandonment of the fundamentals ("reading, writing, arithmetic") for the apparent failure of the school system. Liberals blame the conservatives for the lack of financial support schools receive. Parents blame teachers whom they feel are not properly trained to teach ("those that do, do; and those that don't do, teach"). Teachers blame the parents for not providing the students with the kind of home environment that encourages study. Everyone blames the media for giving today's youth a shallow value system.

But no one cares enough about these things to get to the polls and vote.

My girlfriend sent her son to a private Christian school from preschool through seventh grades. The theory was that he'd get a better education because the class sizes were more manageable, he'd get better individual attention, the better qualified teachers, etc. That was the theory. I think what really happened is that my girlfriend felt like she had better access to the teacher in terms of the teacher's response to her inquiries and the teacher was more willing to contact her if the need arose. What this means is that my girlfriend may have felt that the teacher could not hide behind a state-sponsored paycheck or some administrative bureaucracy.

A smaller classroom? Not always. More individual

attention? Not always, and especially in the older grade such individual scrutiny was easily interpreted by the son as harassment. More qualified teachers? Almost never (personal bias). The major difference was a parent that had an active concern for her son's education and educators that were interested in "keeping the customer happy."

It always seems to come back to parents and teacher. Conservatives and Liberals be damned!

Joe Bustillos
Middle Childhood Development Journal
May 7, 1992

Social breakdown. My girlfriend is a midwestern girl from Strongsville, Ohio. She's sojourned in Southern California for almost 14-years, not by choice, but by necessity.

Many have come to California for the "economic opportunities," others for the weather. She came to see to the upbringing of a son her ex-husband had taken from Ohio to sunny Southern California. Needless to say, she is not impressed with the flash and glitter and purported telegenic qualities of the Southland. Her perceptions of this place are filtered through her primary concern for the welfare of her son and what's good for him and her concerns for herself. So when this place decided to riot and to set itself on fire last week, her negative impressions were confirmed.

On the other hand, I am a native Californian. I remember the orange groves. I remember the two-lane highways and the roadside garage/general stores. I remember being able to play football with my younger brother and sister on the street in front of my house and not having to worry about on-coming traffic. I remember the slower pace.

There's a theory of mine that I often refer to in discussions about social order with my teacher brother-in-law, Paul. The gist of the theory is that you can take only so many rats and put them in a box before the rats start to do unspeakable things to each other. Even if is there is plenty of food and water for the lot, there is some magical population

number where the males stop looking for mates and the females become very aggressive and a large percentage stop eating properly. But people are not rats, which may be to the humans disadvantage, particularly here in Southern California. With people it takes more than mere numbers.

There are metropolises, such as San Francisco, with large concentrated populations which seem to be manage reasonably well. And then there are areas, such as L.A.'s South-Central district, which are really not that heavily populated, which have a propensity for violent eruptions.

Going back to the rat analogy, there are some rats who are highly individualistic and profess to have no need for community. These rats are descendants of the rural rats who once said, "if you can see the smoke from your neighbor's fire, then they are living too close." Some of them demonstrated this principle in South-Central last week. These are the "hacienda" rats.

Then there are the rats who have lived in this depressed state for some time, many generations in fact. Even though there is enough food and water they feel degraded by how they have to get it. They have lost their hope for something better. These are the "welfare" rats.

When hacienda rats and welfare rats are squeezed into a small enough box and a TV camera is put in their faces . . . well, we've seen what there human counterparts can do.

What does this have to do with education? Education is the one remaining institution that crosses the SES lines and can potentially impact the children of both the hacienda and welfare

rats. Maybe in places, such as Southern California, where most of us are feeling either squeezed in too much and just plain hopeless we can catch some of the enthusiasm of our children and encourage them to realize their dreams.

Joe Bustillos
Middle Childhood Development Journal
May 12, 1992

This journal has conveyed a lot of thoughts about the future and potential and impact that teachers and teaching can have. It should be quite understandable, therefore, if my demeanor is a bit withdrawn at this juncture. Yesterday I received my reply to my application into the teacher education program. It looks like I'll have to wait another semester before I can get in. Ugh.

I can remember all of the little saying that are generally offered when one is faced with such disappointment: "good things come for those who wait" or "every cloud has a silver lining" or even better "if at first you don't succeed . . . ." Thanks, but no thanks. I have worked very hard this semester to get the paperwork in, to take the prerequisite exams, to take the prerequisite classes. Part of my frustration is over the vague way that most of this process has been handled. Contacting the Teacher Ed office has been more of an act of faith than when I became a born-again two decades ago.

"Due to the incomplete nature of your file, the Admissions Committee was unable to review your application to enter the Multiple Subject Credential Program in the Fall 1992 semester."

Does that mean that they didn't receive the material I had given them that said they hadn't received before. Or was there more material that they didn't receive that wasn't covered in the first letter? Ana Garza came to our beginning ed class last

night. She said if we had any questions to call Phyllis Charles at 773-2756 between 1 and 5 P.M. But don't call until after next Monday, Phyllis is out of town. Hello? Is anyone there?

Joe Bustillos
Middle Childhood Development Journal
May 14, 1992

My visit to the CDC seemed friendly enough. Of course, I had spent the first half an hour in the wrong room (210 instead of 208) so anything would have been an improvement over the confused look I got from the receptionist at the internship office.

Because my current course of study is designed to get me into the teacher credential program it is hard for me to imagine what use I might find in talking to a counselor at the CDC. Of course, I recognize how developing good interview taking skills and resume writing can translate to any career goal (thank you Richard Bolles), even teaching.

Like I mentioned earlier, I found the receptionist helpful enough and the large collection of pamphlets and newsletters encouraging. Too often those of us who have been in the academic grind for so long fail to recognize that there are other options for history and English major other than teaching and that a Psychology major makes as good a personnel director as anyone. I think the CDC reminded me of that.

Joe Bustillos
Middle Childhood Development Journal
May 21, 1992

I have been thinking about prejudice lately. My personal life and class commitments have kept me busy enough that I haven't been able to shake out a more complete answer from the teacher training people about why my application was rejected. But the mind continues to try to understand.

I have never been a victim of institutional prejudice, or if I have they did a wonderful job convincing me that I was being judged on the merits of my performance and not my ethnicity. It's this vague elusive response from the teacher's training office that make me consider such irrational ideas. At the very least maybe it was just a case of the "squeaky wheel" syndrome: I failed to make my presence felt enough in the training office for them to consider me beyond the folder that got shoved among all the other hundred or so folders. Damn it, I'm not looking for a presidential nomination. I just want to teach.

Prejudice? Probably not, I'm just a victim of poor timing on my part (I was not aware of the course requirements, EDELM315 and CHILD325 until last Oct) and the university budget cuts (Ana Garza said fewer seats this next semester). Nonetheless, this is damn frustrating.

Without trying to sound too neurotic, getting squeezed out like this reminds me of a personal dread of the future that I've always danced around. Back in the distant foggy past, I hung out with the Jesus Freaks. Perhaps their belief in the impending immediate return of Jesus to take his chosen ones to be with him,

the Rapture, did something to my adolescent mind. Maybe I became too existential for my own good.

When I started college in the mid-70s (I can't believe it's been that long), I always felt that if I didn't take advantage of the scholarship money that was being offered me, that it would all vanish. I have no idea if a person with my high school academic record (a "B" average) and moderate family income and "Hispanic" last name can attend the places that I attended, Loyola Marymount University and Biola University, but I was always under the impression that those days were over.

Even my job with Pacific Bell, begun as a summer job, has reflected this insecurity. Just about every two years since when I hired in in 1979, I would find myself in some meeting with an administrator discussing how we're going to have to cut back on people in my job title. As recent as this past month a co-worker with two or so less years seniority was reassigned to a desk job in Alhambra with a cut in pay. Reason? Budgetary shortfall.

Hell, this insecurity has contributed in no small way to why I've never thrown my hat out into the Journalistic ring. I could never handle coming to work and finding my desk in the hallway because someone in the editors office didn't like the way I did my hair the day before. Ugh. My early exposure to Christian Existentialism has obviously reacted poorly to my deep-seated need to security (let's blame Maslow).

I know what I need to do is go down to the office and raise some hell. I just gotta remember to get there between the hours of 1:00 and 5:00 and ask for Phyllis, who's still on vacation.

P.S. I really didn't want my journal entries this semester to end this way. I was going to write something about prejudice and the difficulty teachers have not giving the "A" students all the positive strokes and the "C" and below crowd the negative, but obviously I still needed to vent my spleen. I have enjoyed your obvious personal concern for the subject and us as students and I hope we can work together in the future. JBB

Joe Bustillos
Middle Childhood Development Journal
May 26, 1992

Once again, into the breech . . . Reviewing the material for our final exam has brought home one important aspect of this semester's study: parental care. Parental care above all other factors control the greatest influence in the development of a given child. It seems obvious but the obvious is not always flashy enough to do something about in a presidential election year.

Finding the line between government interference and promoting healthy parenting skills is a line that the politicians and educators have not crossed. We give more thought to requiring driver training for prospective drivers than requiring prospective parents to attend a few parenting classes. I guess it's right up there with the right to ignorantly horde assault rifles. Babies having babies . . . unemployed babies having babies---and the best that the Bush administration can do is have Vice-President Quayle attack a fictional single mom as a bad example for our kids. And this is from a president who cares about our welfare. Oops, I shouldn't use that word.

I agree that I don't want the government telling my girlfriend that she has to deliver a baby once pregnant. That's her decision. That's our decision. But that seems to stand in opposition to the idea of requiring prospective parents to attend parenting classes, possibly requiring some kind of certificate of completion. Who's going to write the curriculum? Who's going to

set the standards? Dr. Spock? The Catholic Church? The Bible? The Mormon Tabernacle Choir?

There is a social responsibility here that needs to be addressed. The pressures of our society and dissolution of our institutions require that we help the parents help the children. It always seems to come back to that, effective parenting is the key. Maybe I'll take Dr. Seuss's route, you folks out there can have the kids. I'll teach the classes and write the books. It's a lot of responsibility, this parenting thing.

Dr. Junn, Child Development

GETTING TO KNOW THE CAREER DEVELOPMENT CENTER
located in LH-208, 773-2131

Our Career Development Center (CDC) is located in Langsdorf Hall in room 208. For those of you who haven't yet visited it, now is your chance! The CDC offers three main services for you: (1) career counseling; (2) personal counseling for emotional or family difficulties; and (3) employment services. All of these services are **free of charge** (just show your current CSUF ID card when entering); CSUF alumni who have graduated for more than 6 months, are charged $25 for the year to access services.

For this assignment, you are to go to the CDC and make use of at least one service, then write about your experience and reaction in your journal sometime before the end of the semester. If your experience is initially negative, state why, then go back again and try one more different service.

To give you a better idea of the specific services offered under each of the three general categories, read the information below and review the attached flyer.

First, under the category of career counseling, the CDC offers a number of options. You may choose to see an individual career counselor who specializes in your major to discuss your future occupational concerns and goals. Call or visit to sign up for an appointment (e.g., Gloria Sims. 773-3121 represents HDCS). If you are very unsure about what career you are headed for, you may want to take advantage of the several vocational tests that are available (e.g., the Strong-Campbell Interest Inventory or the computerized SIGY). The CDC also has a series of videotapes of various career workshops or industry promotionals that you may view at the center. Another very valuable option is to conduct informational interviews by using the alumni phone bank; this is a listing of alumni, currently employed in a wide variety of settings, who are willing to speak to students about their career search. Yet another option recommended by CDC for students who are uncertain about their future career paths is to enroll in the 3 unit Counseling 252-Career Exploration and Life Planning course which explores personal career potentials, employment trends, decision-making, goal-setting, and job search methods. Don't forget to ask the CDC personnel for more information about other skills assessment services and about upcoming workshops on career planning (e.g., resume writing, interview skills and networking, job search techniques, etc.,). See the attached CDC Calendar for a schedule of some of these upcoming events.

Second, the CDC offers free personal counseling for emotional or family difficulties. A number of qualified, empathic professionals are available to talk with you about almost any issue that is causing you concern. If you prefer to speak to a counselor with a similar ethnic background, just mention this when you sign up for an appointment; the staff does include ethnically diverse counselors as well as counselors who are sensitive to multi-cultural and multi-racial issues. If you encounter an emergency situation and need to see a counselor right away, the CDC can arrange to have someone talk with you immediately on a walk-in basis as well. For your information, personal counseling is also available at two other locations on campus--either through the Women's Center (MH-33, 773-3928) or at the Student Health Center (773-2800). Remember, there are plenty of qualified people here to help out if you need them, so don't be afraid to take advantage of these services!

Third, the CDC also provides employment services to students in various forms. For example, you can access a national database of employers seeking job candidates or be listed free of charge on a database for interested employers. There is a library of information from various companies and firms that you may wish to browse through. In addition, the CDC maintains a job listing of local employers (some jobs are full-time, many are part-time, or seasonal) and of on-campus jobs as well. The CDC also sponsors on-campus recruitment for students to interview with potential employers; there is recruitment both for students seeking industry jobs as well as for credentialed teachers seeking teaching and administrative positions.

In short, there is a range of services available to you as you prepare to embark on your career path. One piece of advice, start now! Statistics show that, on average, it takes approximately 6 months to land a job, and now with our economic hard times, this figure may actually be somewhat longer. This should be fair warning that you shouldn't wait until after you graduate--start now, in small steps, and the task won;t seem as formidable later. Also, studies show that the average American does not select and then remain in just one job during the course of his or her life--most people go through several job transitions. Once again, this suggests that the more effective career planning and search skills you acquire now, the easier it will be for you to negotiate career changes in the future! Finally, career planning can seem like a frightening task, but with the right amount of preparation, knowledge, common sense, humor, and a little luck, it can be an enormously interesting journey--so try and relax, enjoy, and hang in there!